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MINUTES OF PVTA'S  
ADVISORY BOARD MEETING  
June 24, 2020

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

The Advisory Board Meeting of the Pioneer Valley Transit Authority was held on Wednesday, June 24, 2020 at 12:00 P.M. remotely in accordance with the Governor's State of Emergency Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A, Section 20, relieving from the requirement of section 20 of chapter 30A that it conduct its meetings in a public place that is open and physically accessible to the public, permitting a public body to allow remote participation by all members.

	<u>Present (39.10 votes)</u>	<u>Not Present (22.98 votes)</u>
Agawam	Michael Squindo	
Amherst	Douglas Slaughter	
Belchertown	Brian O'Leary	
Chicopee		Steve Huntley
East Longmeadow		Carolyn Brennan
Easthampton	Brendan Rogers	
Granby		Glen Sexton
Hadley		David Moskin
Hampden	Becky Moriarty	
Holyoke		Mayor Alex Morse
Leverett		Peter D'Errico
Longmeadow		Mark Gold
Ludlow		Derek DeBarge
Northampton	Mayor David Narkewicz	
Palmer		Barbara Barry
Pelham		Karen Willard-Ribeiro
South Hadley	Michael Sullivan	
Springfield	Tasheena Davis	
Sunderland	Geoff Kravitz	
Ware	John Carroll	
West Springfield	Jim Czach	
Westfield	Peter Miller	
Wilbraham		Paula Dubord
Williamsburg	J.M. Sorrell	
ADA Representative		Vacant
Rider Representative		Patrick Burke

A quorum of 31.05 vote being present, Chairman of the Advisory Board, Mayor David Narkewicz, called the remote meeting of PVTA's Advisory Board to order at 12:13 PM; majority vote of 39.10 present.

## 2. PUBLIC COMMENT

Chairman Mayor Narkewicz asked if any members of the public would like to make a public comment. No public comments were made.

## 3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chairman Mayor Narkewicz asked for a motion from the Advisory Board to approve the meeting minutes from the May 20, 2020 Regular Advisory Board Meeting.

**Motion:** Moved and seconded (O'Leary/Squindo) to approve the meeting minutes from the May 20, 2020 Regular Advisory Board Meeting.

Chairman Mayor Narkewicz asked if the Board had any discussion. Hearing none; asked for a roll call vote to approve the minutes.

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
Agawam	Michael Squindo	
Amherst	Douglas Slaughter	
Belchertown	Brian O'Leary	
Chicopee		
East Longmeadow		
Easthampton	Brendan Rogers	
Granby		
Hadley		
Hampden	Becky Moriarty	
Holyoke		
Leverett		
Longmeadow		
Ludlow		
Northampton	Mayor David Narkewicz	
Palmer		
Pelham		
South Hadley	Michael Sullivan	
Springfield	Tasheena Davis	
Sunderland	Geoff Kravitz	
Ware	John Carroll	
West Springfield	Jim Czach	
Westfield	Peter Miller	
Wilbraham		
Williamsburg	J.M. Sorrell	
ADA Representative		
Rider Representative		

All present were in favor. Motion passed by a vote of 13-0.

## 4. CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER REPORT

Chief Financial Officer (CFO), Lisa Seymour, reported on the 10-month budget to actual through April 30, 2020:

<b>REVENUES</b>		<b>FY20 Actual</b>	<b>FY20 Budget</b>
	Farebox	5,077,788	5,379,465
	School Passes	566,553	1,150,561
	Advertising	252,073	250,000
	Interest & Insurance Recoveries, Misc.	322,221	362,500
	Operating Subsidy - Other Grants	357,109	1,257,594
	Federal Operating Grants	1,304,787	5,934,888
	State Contract Assistance	20,915,002	21,116,667
	Discretionary Funding	508,291	500,201
	Local Assessments	7,642,986	7,834,061
<b>Total Revenue</b>		<b>\$ 36,946,810</b>	<b>\$ 43,785,937</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>			
<b>Administration</b>		2,542,377	3,322,088
<b>Paratransit Service</b>			
	National Express	6,089,963	6,835,460
	East Longmeadow	46,473	59,834
	Northampton	20,780	23,089
	Williamsburg	10,312	8,333
	Agawam	26,146	24,258
	Fuel	579,429	766,667
	Maintenance & Miscellaneous	193,489	245,833
	Insurance Claim Payments	33,930	16,667
<b>Total Paratransit</b>		<b>7,000,522</b>	<b>7,980,141</b>
<b>Fixed Route Service</b>			
	First Transit	23,891,723	24,787,076

	UMTS	3,013,948	3,640,838
	Shuttles	243,225	265,546
	Fuel	1,993,855	2,156,991
	Utilities, Security, Janitorial, Maint	255,545	365,356
	Union Station CAM Charges	269,868	270,000
	Maintenance Recovery	(174,778)	(250,000)
	Insurance Claim Payments	269,418	70,833
<b>Total Fixed Route Service</b>		<b>29,762,804</b>	<b>31,306,640</b>
<b>Allocated Expenditures</b>	Allocated Insurance	460,525	483,148
	Allocated IT Support	228,675	249,521
<b>Gross Expenditures</b>		<b>39,994,903</b>	<b>43,341,538</b>

**COVID Expenditures through April 30, 2020**

PPE, supplies, equipment	\$	74,445.30
Advertising Loss signed contracts cancelled	\$	29,259.00
Advertising Loss Contracts in process	\$	34,827.00
School Billing contract Adjustments	\$	20,222.00
SATCO/VATCO COVID (not including fare loss)	\$	878,414.00
UMASS COVID (not including fare loss)	\$	30,811.00
NEXT COVID (not including fare loss)	\$	89,889.00

**Total (does not include fare loss) \$ 1,157,867.30**

<b>Farebox Monthly</b>	<b>Actual</b>	<b>Budgeted</b>
March	\$ 317,911.00	\$ 537,947.00
April	\$ 142,729.00	\$ 537,947.00
<b>Total Loss</b>	<b>\$ 460,640.00</b>	

CFO Seymour reported the following:

The CARES grant has been approved by FTA and is available for use. We will be amending the lines on the grant to specify how different monies will be spent. Rather than use one line of operating, we will be designating more specific funding such as protective equipment, bus retro fit, IT equipment, etc.

The RANS borrowing package is currently with bond counsel. It will be sent electronically to prospective bidders the week of 6/15/20. The borrowing remains at \$13 million.

Insurance renewal has been completed and sent to Eastern Insurance. We will be requesting a partial policy for the dates of November 1, 2020 to June 30, 2021 with a year renewal on July 1, 2021 to allow the insurance to coincide with the fiscal year.

The DBE goal setting for years 2021, 2022 and 2023 has been completed and is out for public review. It will then be sent to FTA for approval. This is done every three years. Our DBE goal is at 4% for these three years with 2% race neutral and 2% race conscious.

## **5. DIRECTOR OF TRANSIT OPERATIONS REPORT**

Director of Transit Operations, Paul Burns, reported the following:

Fixed Route Ridership continued to decline significantly due to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. Ridership for March fell 35.6%. April showed a decline of 78.5%.

Paratransit ridership had begun to show consistent improvement in January and February with ridership up 9% in February. However, the impacts of the pandemic have resulted in significant ridership declines. March has seen a reduction in ridership of more than 36%. Preliminary ridership data indicates that April paratransit ridership is down by more than 80%.

NEXT is working with PVRTA and Greater Springfield Senior Services to help provide meals for Seniors throughout the region during the pandemic. Meals are delivered to up to five facilities each day in the Pioneer Valley to help ensure Seniors have nutritious meals available to them.

Dial-A-Ride service has been expanded during the pandemic to assure that seniors can access vital services that include medical appointments and grocery shopping. Current Dial-A-Ride service times are 6:30 am to 5:00 pm.

PVRTA has begun to plan for the resumption of normal operations. As we work to address the challenges of operating in an environment impacted by COVID-19, we are examining our operations systemically and working to develop effective strategies that ensure we continue to provide appropriate levels of service to our passengers while also ensuring the safety of our riders and employees.

Each area of operations, from transit provision to customer service, maintenance, and administration will have unique impacts and challenges that need to be addressed. We are working to solicit feedback from employees at all levels to determine effective strategies that will allow us to address the concerns of all stakeholders as we continue to provide service to help the region rebound.

As the phased reopening of businesses in the region continues, we are planning a gradual resumption of normal service across the system. In general, we anticipate service hours to extend until 10:00pm beginning the week of June 28. Hours on specific routes will likely run later to support expected demand from restaurant retail outlets that have identified staff in need of later transportation.

We anticipate that all SATCo and VATCo buses will be outfitted with plexiglass protective barriers for the driver's area by July 19<sup>th</sup>.

We are currently reviewing fare collection policies as well as boarding strategies and anticipate a return to fare collection and front door boarding by mid-July.

Soldiers Home staff have worked diligently to implement effective protocols to address PVRTA's concerns. Fixed route service to the Soldiers Home resumed effective Friday, June 12<sup>th</sup>. Paratransit service resumed on June 16<sup>th</sup>.

## **6. ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT**

Administrator Sandra Sheehan reported the following:

On Monday, the House approved \$5.25 million and understands that the Senate is going to move forward with that as well.

No state budget is in sight with just a couple of weeks left before the end of the fiscal year. It appears as if instead of the usual process of back and forth between the House, Senate, and administration to agree on a budget, the idea of an interim budget may be in the works. Commonwealth Magazine hints at a budget that may be agreed on by the House, Senate, and administration before it is released. State policymakers appear to be discussing a budget that is done jointly and for an interim time period, an interim budget through July or August would give lawmakers a chance to see if Congress passes another federal stimulus bill before the August recess.

PVTA is planning for a 1/12<sup>th</sup> budget based on last year's State Contract Assistance. MassDOT has indicated that based on the period of the budget that is approved, a lump sum might be provided to the RTAs instead of the 1/12<sup>th</sup>. This would be very helpful as it would assist PVTA with cash flow.

The FAST Act is set to expire at the end of September, House Democrats announced a \$1.5 trillion infrastructure plan that could generate long-term economic activity amid the recession. The proposal would direct hundreds of billions of dollars to transportation priorities, including funding for a passenger rail expansion connecting Boston and western Massachusetts. It also reaches beyond transit, roads and bridges to suggest significant federal investment in affordable housing, education, internet access, clean energy and wastewater systems. The plan would include more than \$300 billion of spending on nationwide road and bridge maintenance, particularly aiming at the thousands of structurally deficient bridges across the country.

Ridership has shown a continuous slight increase reflective of the Governor's reopening phases. The transit system will be operating regular summer service starting June 28<sup>th</sup>. In coordination with the installation of temporary drivers' barriers, PVTA will resume front door boarding's on July 19<sup>th</sup> for the Springfield and Northampton based routes. PVTA will be implementing a mobile ticketing system through the BusPlus App from Bytemark as a contactless way to pay to ride the system. Deployment of the App is scheduled for July 19<sup>th</sup> with drivers and staff being trained on the specifics of the App a week prior to its deployment.

PVTA is committed to monitoring ridership to safely align service to meet returning demand. To inform our operational decisions, we have been actively leveraging data, tools, and regional information sources to monitor and identify projected trends in ridership and customer behavior. This comprehensive analysis will continue throughout the recovery period to ensure our recovery plans will remain flexible, responsive, and data driven. Any changes in service will be announced using all available communications tools, including Facebook, screens and monitors, the Transit App and our website.

PVTA will continue with its educational campaign which includes signs that provide easy-to-understand instructions to encourage passengers to practice ideal transit behaviors including the wearing of face coverings, hand washing, limiting conversation on the bus and not riding if you are sick.

As we start the new fiscal year, PVTA will be facing many challenges based on the current uncertainties including those associated with the diverse agencies and institutions that rely on PVTA

for transportation access. PVRTA must be flexible in its response to this changing environment and our staff and that of the contracting companies are ready to tackle this challenge.

SATCo driver, Michael Stewart, was driving his route when he stopped to put out a vehicle fire then got back on the bus and continued driving. PVRTA presented Mr. Stewart with a certificate for his heroic act.

PVRTA has been providing transportation for marches in the area based on request.

## **7. NEW BUSINESS**

Chairman Mayor Narkewicz reported that there is no new business to discuss.

## **8. OLD BUSINESS**

Chairman Mayor Narkewicz reported that there is no old business to discuss.

## **9. ADJOURNMENT**

Chairman Mayor Narkewicz asked for a motion to adjourn.

**Motion:** Moved and seconded (Squindo/O'Leary) to adjourn.

Chairman Mayor Narkewicz asked if the Board had any discussion. Hearing none; asked for a roll call vote.

<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
Agawam	Michael Squindo
Amherst	Douglas Slaughter
Belchertown	Brian O'Leary
Chicopee	
East Longmeadow	
Easthampton	Brendan Rogers
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Sunderland	Geoff Kravitz
Ware	John Carroll
West Springfield	Jim Czach
Westfield	Peter Miller

Wilbraham  
Williamsburg  
ADA Representative  
Rider Representative

J.M. Sorrell

All present were in favor. Motion passed by a vote of 13-0.

The meeting of the Advisory Board adjourned at 1:02 P.M.

**A TRUE RECORD**

ATTEST:   
**BRANDY PELLETIER**

Documents filed with Board Meeting packet:

- Roll Call Votes
- Regular Advisory Board Minutes of 5-20-2020
- 10-Month Budget to Actual

**MINUTES APPROVED: August 19, 2020**